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A comfortable
exhortacion
agaynst
the
chaunces of death
made by
Eras-
mus
of
Rotter.

ANNO 1553.

Tho. Berthelet.

Into this wozlde naked we entered
And so we must agayne out of it fars
Death by no man can be resisted.
There is no syues thing if will spare
Than wherfore shulde we for it care?
It availeth not, but passe on foothe,
The harde strokis (chance thei unware)
And paciently take them in woorthhe.
For thei that take death unpaciently
Seme to the wozlde to set their mynde
Blessed be thei that in our lord die
For thei be sure the very life to fynde.



A comfortable exhortacion agaynst the chances of death, made by Erasmus Rot.



Wⁱth bitter and how greeuous a wounde perceþ
your fatherly herte, for the
death of your mosse goodly childe, I lightly con-
fecte by myne owne sorowe. And ther-
fore I were right muche vncourtois, if
that I in so sorowfull a chance wolde
warne you his father to make lamen-
tacion, whan I that am but a stranger
can not chose but wepe & waile. Ye
might well thinke me rude & vntaught,
if I wold go about to heale your greffe,
whan I my selfe had neede of a phisiciā:
if I wolde let you his father to weepe,
whan the teares stille abundantly tri-
kell downe fr̄m myne eies.

And all be it, that the ilke stroke of

A. ii. fo

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Fortune ought deaper to perce your fasherly brest : yet your great wisedome was wont so to rule you (in all your dedes) that ye not onely with a stronge and a stoute minde, but also with a glad som and a mery cheare, wolde suffre and passe ouer all suche chances as hap to mankynde . Wherfore ye ought so to settell your selfe , that if ye can not as yet put awaie clene the sorowe of your herte (for no man can denie but that ye haue right good cause to be heauye) yet at the least wise some what suppreesse & moderate the same dolour . And for what cause shulde ye not clene forget it : seyng that the space of a fewe daies will cause idiottes so to do , me thynketh reason shulde persuade an excellent wise man . For what selie mother dooeth so extremely bewaile the deathe of hir childe , but that in shorte space of tyme hir sorowe somewhat asslaketh , and at length is clene forgotten ? To haue al-

ways

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Was a stedfasse minde , is a token of a perfecte wise man . But for those chances, vnto the whiche we all egally (both more and lesse) bee subiectes, to so:owe out of measure , me thinketh it extreme foolishnes . For who is not ware (exepte he that mindeth nothyng) that he is borne vnder such a condicion , that whan so euer god will call hym : he muste soorth with nedes departe hence? So than, what other thyng (I pracie you) doothe he , that bewaileth ones death, than lamentably complaine, that he is mortall? Or why shulde we rather sozowe the departyng hence, than the entryng into this worlde , consideryng that bothe are egally naturall? Euen in like case as though one shulde geue great thankes, for to be called to a great feaste or diner , and woulde lament and demeane great sozowe, whan he shulde departe awaie thence.

If that a man, as it were from an

A iii high

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þower ^{mark} high lokynge place, wolde aduise well the condicion and life of all mankynde: might he not well reken hym selfe a nice felowe, if he amonge so manifolde examples of priuation, and amonge so thicke burials of yonge and olde, wolde be greuously vexed in his mynde, as thoughe unto hym onely were chanced some newe and great iuell: & as though he only being happy aboue other, wolde desire and loke to stande without the common lotte?

For whiche consideracion the excellent wise men, that founde and made lawes in olde time, to thentent that thei wolde somewhat incline to the affections of parentes, and to thende thei wolde not be seene to exclude every bodye from that passion, beyng also condenmed of some of the stoicke physiopers: thei limitted unto them a certaine tyme to mourne, the whiche endured not very longe: Either because that

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that thei well vnderstode and knewe,
that in those maner of chances, the whiche
the are bothe commune to all folkes,
and also doo not hap through any insus-
rye of ffortune, but are induced by the
verie course and ordynance of Nature,
shorte mournyng shulde suffice: yea vnto
them that were not able to mode-
rate all affections: considerynge that
Natures selfe by littell and littell sowe-
pleth the wounde that she made, and
weareth awaie the scarre: Or els be-
cause thei dislighetly marked, that mour-
nyng was not onely vnprofitable vnto
them that were bemoned, but also hurt-
ful to them that made suche mone, and
greuous and vnguiete to their frendes,
aqueintance, and companie.

But nowe if a man wolde consider
the matter a right, dooth it not seeme
a point of madnes, willyngly of one
harme to make twayne, and whan ye
can not by no maner reason recover

A.iii. your

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your predestinate losse , yet wilfully to
annoye and hurte your owne selfe : In
like maner as though a man that his
ennemis hath spoyled of parte of his
goodes, wolde in his anger thowe all
that euer remained in to the sea : and
than wolde saye, how he by that meane
did bewaile his losse . If we littell re-
garde the noble Minus , whose sai-
yng maye beseme any philosophier to
speake : Thou muste paciently suffre , and
giutche not at it that can not be amended :
Let vs call to mynde the muche good-
ly example of the right excellent kynge
David , the whiche so soone as tidyn-
ges was brought hym , that his sonne ,
that he so tenderly loued , was dead , he
soorthwith rose vp from the grounde ,
and shaked and brusshed of the dusse ,
he threwe awaye his sherte of heare ,
and so whan he had wasshed and an-
noynted , with a gladsom countenance
and a merychere he wente to diner .

And

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And because his frendes meruailed therat, he saied to them: For what entent shulde I kill my selfe with wo and sorowe? For vnto this time some hope I had, that god beyng moued with my lamentacion, wolde haue saued my childe a liue: but nowe all our wepyng teares can not restore hym agayne to vs alive: we shall shortly sped vs hence after hym. who is so fonde to trouche and praise hym, whom he knoweth well will incline to no praiers? There is nothyng more vntreatable than deathe, nothyng is more deffe, nor nothyng more rigorous. By crafty handelyng the sauage beastes, yea the mosse wilde of them all, are made tame: There is awaie to breake the harde marbull stone: and a meane to mollifie the diamant: but there is no thyng, wherwith deathe will be appased or overcome. It neither spareth beautie, riches, age, nor dignitee.

A v And

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And therfore it ought to greue vs much
the lesse, either because it can not be es-
chewed, or els because it is egally com-
mune to vs all.

What nedeth me to goe aboute to re-
herce to you here the manisfolde exam-
ples of the gentiles, the whiche with a
noble and a constant courage toke well
in woorth the the death of their dere fren-
des? In whiche constantnes of mynde,
is it not a great rebuke for vs, that be
christians, to be of them overcomen?
Call now to your remembrance thilke
saying (well worthie to be enrolled in
writing) of Telamon and Anaxago-
ras: I wiste well I begot a mortall cre-
ature.

Thynke upon Pericles, the duke of
Athens, the whiche is no lesse renol-
med for his eloquence, than he is for his
force and manlines: all be it that he
within. iiiii. daies space losse his. ii.
sonnes, that were indelwed with right
noble

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noble qualitees, he not onely never changed his chere, but also he, beyng crowned (as was the gyse than) spake and reasoned amonge the people of mat ters concernyng their common welthe.

Haue in mynde also Xenophon the mortheie scholer of Socrates: to whom tidynge was brought, as he was doyng sacrifice, that his sonne was dead: he made no more to dooe but put of his crowne, and forthwith did put it on againe, as soone as he vnderstode, that his sonne was manly slaine in battaile.

Remembre Dion of Syracuse, the whiche on a tyme (as he was secretly talkyng with his friendes) sodainly hearde a great noyse and rumblyng in his house: And whan he had inquired what the matter mente, and was ensoumed, that his sonne had fallen from on high, and was dead: he beyng therwith nothyng amoued, comman-

ded

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ded the corps (as the maner was) to be
deliuered to women to burie : For he
saide, he wolde not leaue of his preten-
ced purpose for that matter.

Whom Demosthenes folowyng, the
vii. daie after the deathe of his onely
and most entierly beloued daughter, be-
yng crowned and arraied in a faire
white garment, he came for the abrode
amonge the people. Of whiche deade
the accusacion of his soe Aeschynnes,
bothe confirmech the trouthe, and set-
teth out the glorie.

Thinke also vpon the kynge Antigo-
nus, the which whan he herde tidynge,
that his owne sonne was slaine in a dis-
ordred skirmishe : pausynge a littell,
and beholdyng them well that brought
hym the tidynge, with a stoute and a
constant minde he saide : D Alcinonen
(that was his sonnes name) all to late
thou perishest, that woldest so foolisshes-
ly cast thy selfe awaie amonge thy foes,

no^o

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nothynge regardyng thine owne helthe
nor my monitions and wordes.

If ye delyte more to here the examples of Romaines, beholde Puluillus Horace, to whō (as he was dedicatyng the capitoll) tidynge was brought, that his sonne was dead: he neither drewe awaie his hande from the poste, nor tourned not his chere from religion to private sorowe.

Consider howe Paulus Aemilius, whan he had within the space of. vii. daies losse his. ii. sonnes, he came soorthe abrode amonge the people of Rome, and there shewed them, that he was verie glad, that by the lamentacion of his householde (which was but a private sorowe) he had redeemed the enuie of fortune bente toware them all.

Thinke also how M. Fabius Mari-
mus (whan he was consull, and had lost
his sonne, that was than a man in high
rowme and dignitee, and greatly re-
nowned

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renounmed for his noble acte) he came
soorthe abrode amonge the people ge-
thered to gether, and there to them he
recited the commendacion of his sonne.

Thinke on also whan Lato Lenso-
rius his eldest sonne died, the whiche
was a yonge man of singular witte and
highe prowesse, and therto electe and
chosen to be Mayre: yet was he nothing
so amoued with that chance, that he
wolde in anything more slackelie ende-
avour him selfe about the nedes and hu-
snes of the common welthe.

Ye shulde rememb're Marcius, whose
surname was kynge, whan his sonne of
righte noble disposition, and that stode
highly in the fauour and good opinion
of the people, and therto beyng his only
sonne, was dead, he toke the losse of him
with so constaute a mynde, that soorth-
with eu'en from the buriall of hym he
caused the Senatours to assemble to
gether, to ordeine lawes concernyng
theic

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theſe common welthe.

þe ſhulde not forget Lucius Sylla, whose valiant and moſte fierce courage towarde his ennemis, the death of his ſonne coude nothyng abate, nor cauſe that he ſhulde ſeme falſely to haue uſurped or taken vpon hym to be caſled by this ſurname Felix, that is to ſaie luc-
kie or welthie.

Whan Laius Cesar (that was Sylla his felowe in rowmeth) had inuaded Britaine, and had tidyngeſ that his daughter was dead: yet er thre daies were fully ended, he wente aboute his imperiall busines.

Whan Marcus Crassus (in the warre that he made agaynst the Parthiens) behelde his ſonnes head, the whiche his ennemis in ſkorne and deriſion had ſet vp on a morispikes ende, and the more to exasperate and augmet his calamitee, thei approched nere to his armie, and with wordes of reproche & blame,

theſe

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thei shewed it vp : he toke in woorth all
that doyng with so constant a mynde ,
that sodainely he rode forby all his bat-
tailes , and saied to them with a loude
voynce , that that was his owne priuate
harme , but the helthe and saluacion of
the common weale stode in the saues-
garde of them his men of warre .

But nowe to ouerpasse the many-
folde examples of Galba , Piso , Sce-
nula , Metellus , Scaurus , Marcellus ,
and Aufidius : remembre whan Clau-
dius Cesar had losse hym , whom be
bothe begotte , and mosse entierly loued :
yet for all that he (his owne selfe) in the
common pulpit lauded and praised his
sonne , the cors beyng present , all onely
couered with a littell veile : and whan
all the people of Rome wepte and be-
wailed his sonnes deathe , he his father
wepte not a teare .

And surely like as it is a right goodly
thyng to folowe and do as these men
did :

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did: enen so were it a right shamesfull
thyng, if men shulde not be founde as
stedfasse and as stoutely minded as wo-
men haue ben in suche case.

Cornelia sawe and behelde hir two
sonnes (Tit. Graccus, and Caius
Graccus) slaine and vnburied: and
whan hir frendes comforted hir and
saide, she had a wretched chanc: I
wyll never saie (quoth she) that I am
vnlucky or vnsfortunate, that haue borne
suche two children.

But wherto do we nowe repeke these
examples out of ancient cronicles: as
thouȝt we sawe not daiely before our
face sufficient examples? Beholde your
neighbours, beholde your kynsfolke
and alies: how many, yea sely women,
shall ye finde, the whiche verie mode-
rately take in good woorth the deathe
of their children? This matter is so
plaine, that there nedeth no great helpe
of philosophie thereto. For he that

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Wolde consider well in his minde, howe
wretched on all sides this our life is, to
how many perils, to how many sickes-
nesses, to how many chaunces, to how
many cares, to how many incommode-
ties, to how many vices, and to howe
many injuries it is endangered: howe
littell and howe small a portion thereof
we passe soorth (I will not saie in plea-
sure) that is not attacted with some ma-
ner gresse and displeasure: & than far-
ther to consider how swestely it vanisheth
& rolleth awaie, that we maie in maner
rejoice and be glad of them that ben de-
parted out of this worlde in their youth.

The shortnes of our life Euripides sa-
dly expresseth, whiche calleth the life
of mortall creatures one littell daie.
But Phalerenus Demetrius doth bet-
ter, whiche correctyng the saying of
Euripides saith, that the life of man
wulde rather be called the minute of
an houre. But Pyndarus saith
besse

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besse of all, whiche calleth the life of man the dreme of a shadowe. He ioigneth two speciall thynges of nothyng together, to thentent that he wolde declare, howe vaine a thyng this life is. Nowe howe wretched and miserable the same life is on every behalfe, the auncient poetes semed to perceiue it passing well: the whiche demed, that a man coude not more truely nor more better name mortall creatures, than surname them very miserable wretches. For the firsste age or formesse parte of mans life (the whiche is reckened the best) is ignorant: The middell parte of the life is assailed with trouble and care of manifolde busynesses: and yet all this while I speake but of them that be moste luckie and fortunate. Therfore who is he, whiche of very right will not approue the saying of Silenus: The best is never to be borne, the nexte is most swifly to be clene extincte:

W ii

who

A G A I N S T

Who will not allowe the ordinance
of the Thraciens, the whiche customa-
bly use to receiue them that be borne in
to this wortle with lamentacion and
mournyng: and againe whan thei de-
parte hence, thei be very glad and de-
meane great ioye?

And he that by hym selfe considereth
inwardly those thynges, that Hegesias
was wonte to declare to his herers, he
wold rather desire his owne deathe than
abhorre it: and wolde farre more indis-
ferently take in woorth the deathe of
his frendes.

*unhappily
dealt*
But nowe your fatherly sorowe com-
meth soorthe and saith: He died er
his daie, he died in his childehode, he
died so passing a good childe, yea and so
cowardly disposed vnto vertue, that he
was worthie to haue liued many many
yeres: Your fatherly sorowe complai-
neth, that the course of nature is
subuerted, seyng that you his father

an

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an olde man, shoulde ouerliue your
sonne a yonge man. But I ure ie you
for the loue of God tell me, what ye call
before his daie: as though every daie
of a mans life coude not be his laste
daie? One before he cometh in to this
worlde, and whan bineth it hath any
shape of a creature reasonable, is stran-
gled and dieth, euен vnder the handes
of nature working and fourmyng of
it. An other dieth in the birthe. An
other cryng in the cradell is snatched
awaise by deathe. An other in the flow-
rishyng youth dieth, whan scarcely as
yet it hath any taste of the lyfe. Of so
many thousandes of people, to how seid
is it geuen (as Horace nameth it) to
step vpon the grice of olde age? with-
out doubt God hath vnder suche a
lawe constituted the soule in the gar-
son of this littell bodie, that what so e-
uer daie, or what so euer moment he
will commaunde it to departe thence,

B iii

it must

A C A I N S T

It muste by and by nedes go. Nor there
is none that can of right thinke hym
selfe to be called forthe before his daie,
consideryng that there is no man that
hath a daie certaine to hym appointed:
But that day is his lawfull daie, whiche
the so ever he our soueraine capitaine
wolde shulde be his laste daie. If we
wyll worke wisely, we shulde so abide
euery daie as it were our very last. I
preie you, what maketh it matter, seyng
the life is so shorte and fugitiue, whe-
ther we die betimes, or tarie somewhat
longer. For it skilleth no more than it
doth, whan many be brought to execuci-
on, which of them shulde be first headed
or hanged: It is all one whiche is the
firste, the thirde or the eight. And what
other thinge els is the life it selfe, but a
certaine perpetuall course vnto deathe?
Sauyng that their chance is more com-
modious, the which from so laborious
an exercise of the life are dispated

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be tynges. But as it is a touche of a
bravades felowe to departe a waie from
the armie and byke the arras, without
the capitaines commandement sit: So it
is a foolish point amonge that ingrati-
tude, when leade is gaule, to geuen of
the capitaines, not gladly to take it: And
most speciallly, if he that hath nowe li-
cence to go, mai departe his waie home
with laude and preise, and to hym no
rebuke nor shaine. Nor it is not conve-
nient, that one shuld sit and recken how
many yeres he hath lived. The age
shulde be esteemed according to the no-
ble dedes: And he (as Homere saith)
is not reputed to haue lived, that hath
poistered the erthe, and made a nom-
bre: but he, the whiche sad and sobrely
passyng foorthis life, leaueth behinde
hym an honest remembraunce to them
that come after.

Doore ye complaine, that God sente

18 iii

you

you soorthwurthe a childe, as ye
wolde desire to haue haþ many yeres to
come & wolþ perdie your sonne. died not
so soone, he was now come to the age of
xx. yeres. he which age (after myne
opinion) is best to die, for so muche as
þa life is molte weete. Now we was he to
his countrey very þeþtisfull, now was
he to his father very lowely and getill,
now was he among his felowes a very
pleasant companion, and nowe had he a
good & a perfecte mynde to godwarde.
He decessed ignorant of vices, and wha
he had not tasted but littell of the cala-
mitees and miseries of this worlde.
But what he shulde haue knownen and
haue felte (if he had lived longer) it is
uncertaine. So doubtle we se very often
times, that the later age doothe bothe
infecte the clene conuersacion of yonge
age with more greuous vices, and spot-
teth and defileth the felicitee of youthe,
with manifolde miserable grieses.

From

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From all these fuels and perils, death
quickely withdrew hym. Nowe make
you safe and surely reioyce and be glad,
that you haue had so good and so ver-
tuous a sonne, ye or rather haue. But
be it (as you suppose) that you had him,
and that nowe ye be deprived and haue
losse hym. Whether of very right ought
you rather to tourment and vere your
selfe for that ye haue forgone hym: or
els reioyce and be glad that ye had such
a sonne? Take you hede that it be not a
pointe of vnykynnes, that ye shulde re-
membre the requeste of the geste to be
restored agayne, and nothyng to mynde
the geste. No doubt a childe of a good
disposition is a great geste: but yet is he
so geuen, that ye shulde take and haue
pleasure with him for a time, and not
that he shulde be yours for euer. You
that be a perfecte wise man, consider
this by your selfe: yea let vs both to ges-
ther consider on this wise.

B v

It

A G A I N S T

If a great prince shulde lende vs a
tabull of an exceeding great price, and of
an excellent workmanship, to passe our
time with: whether ought we (whan
so euer it pleaseþ hym to demaunde or
call for it) with a glad chere, ye and
more ouer gentilly thankyng hym, to
deliuer it againe: or els with heawy and
sorowfull countenance shall we com-
plaine to hym on this wise: O cruell
prince, of howe precious a geste hast
thou spoyled vs: Howe great a plea-
sure hast thou berafte and taken from
vs: Howe soone hast thou taken from
vs, contrarie to our opinion, this so ex-
cellent a thyng.

Might not he of very right to our
so vnykynde complaentes answere on
this wise: Haue I this rewarde for my
gentill and courtoys dede: Remembre
ye nothyng, saue onely that, that ye
haue forgone the mosste faire tabull:
Haue ye forgot, that I of myne owns
good

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good will and freely lente it to you? And that ye haue nowe so longe while (of my gentilnes and sufferance) fed your eies, and delited your mynde. It was of my liberalitee and freedome, that I lente it you: and nowe whan I require it againe, I doe but right: perdic ye haue had by me som aduantage, ye losse no thyng, saue that through your folie, ye feigned that thyng to be your owne, that was but lente you. And so ye esteme it to be losse, that is restored to the owner againe. But the more precious and delectable that the thyng was, that I lente and let you haue at your pleasure, the more a great deale ye ought to haue thanked me. Nor ye oughte not to thynde it to bee to soone required againe, the whiche without any iniurie or wronge might haue bene kepte from you.

If this reason can not be proued false by no meane of argumentacion: than

thynde

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shynke howe muche more iustely Ma-
ture (with suche maner wordes) might
reproue bothe our lamentacion and so-
rowfull complainynges. And vndoub-
tedly by these maner of reasons our so-
rowe ought to be swaged, yea if it were
so, that a man were utterly extincte by
death, and there remained nothyng of
vs after the buriall.

Now if we at the less geue credence to
it, wherof Socrates in Plato, doubted
nothinge at all, that is to wit: the very
man to be the soule, and this bodie to be
nothyng els but the pipe or littell house
of the soule: Or els to saye trouthe, it
maie bee called the buriall or prison of
the soule: and whan it escapeth out
therof, than at the lasse it cometh to li-
bertee to liue muche moze welthily
than it did before. Wherfore than shuld
we sozowfully blame death, seyng that
he that dieth, dothe not perisshe, but
than he semeth rather to be borne.

And

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And we ought to reioyce in the soule
(whiche we can not with our eies de-
cerne) as muche and none other wise,
than we be wonte to reioyce and take
pleasure in our frendes that ben absent.
And I doubt whether is more delecta-
ble and reioycyng to vs, whan thei ben
present, or els whan thei ben absent: for
so much as the corporal liuyng together
is wonte to minister to vs matter of dis-
pleasure, and the muche beyng in com-
panie to gether doothe somewhat abate
the ioyfulnessse of frendshyp. If ye de-
spye an example of this thyng, be not
the apostels a sufficient argument, the
whiche than began to take very fruicti-
on in Christe & truely to loue him, after
the corporall presence was taken from
them: On the same wise is the frende-
ship of them that bee good, the whiche
stedfastly perseuere in coupling and
knittyng to gether of the myndes,
and not of the bodies. And there is

no

A G A I N S T

no vnsolence, no space of tyme, nor no dstance of places, that can seuer or deuide the couplyng of myndes. So that me thinketh it a very chidissh poynte, to thinke that a frende were clene losse and gone, so soone as he were out of sight. You maie (as ofte as ye will) haue your somme presente, bothe in your thought and in your wordes: And he (on the other side) remembreteth you, and perceiuethe the tender affections of your mynde, ye and other while in your slepe both your soules embrace eche other, and talke to gether of somme secrete thinges. What thynges let feth, that ye maie not euuen very nowe imagine to liue with him, with whom soone after ye are in pointe to liue? I praise you, how briese and shorte is all the whole tyme that we liue here?

Hitherto haue I vsed the remedies, the whiche I might well vse, if I had to dooe with a paunym. Nowe let vs bresely consider, what godlynes and
christis

DEATH.

christian faith ought to require of vs.

First and foremost, if it were so, that death were a thynge mosse miserable: yet it behaueth vs to take it in good woorth, seyng that there is none other remedie. And more ouer, if death shuld clene extinguishe man, that nothyng after shulde remaine: yet we shoulde there with be contente, for as muche as it maketh an ende of many calamitees and grieses, whiche we suffre in this life. But seyng that death deluereþ the soule (beyng of ethierall beginnyng) out of the dongion of the poulderous and heauie bodie: in a maner we ought to reioice and be glad of them that be departed hence out of this wretched worlde: and that thei bee retourned home againe to that welthie libertee, from whence thei came. Nowe than considering that death (without any doubt) conueigheth the good deuoute soules out of the stormes of this troublous lyfe

vnto

A G A I N S T

unto the porre or hauen of life perdurable, and that not so muche as a heare of a mans head shal perisse (for the bo
dies also at lenth shalbe called to enjoy the same life euerlastyng.) I preie you, whether ought we to mourne and wepe, or els to be glad and rejoyce in hym, whom death in due time taketh out of this most troublous sea of the life, and carieth hym in to that quiete and sure ressyng place of euerlastyng lyfe : Go to nowe a littell while, and laie together the soule enormitees, the painful labours, and the perils and dangers of this life (if it may be called a life.) And on the other side reken and cast what commoditees and pleasures (of that other life) are all redie prepared for the godlie creatures that be plucked hence awaie: And than ye shall soone perceiue, that no man can dooe more unrightouslie than he, the whiche lamentable bewaileth that high

DEATH.

high goodnes, vnto the whiche only we
be both borne andordeined, suen as
thoughe it were a right great and gre-
uous harme. Pe crie out, because ye
be leste comfortles alone without chil-
dren, whan ye haue begotte a soule to
inhabite heuen: the holy remembrance
of whom (as it were of a divine thinge)
ye maie reverence, the whiche aboue in
heuen beyng carefull for you, maie great-
ly forther the prosperous successe of your
busines here. For he is nother ignorant
of mortall folkes busines, nor hath not
forgone with the bodie the lowly rever-
ence and tender loue, whiche he was
wonte to beare to you his father. No
doubt he liueth, beleue me he liueth, and
peradventure is present with vs, and he
reth, and perceiuteth this our communi-
cation, and both laugheth at and damp-
neth this our lamentacion. And if the
grossenes of our bodies letted not, per-
chance we shulde here him blaming vs

L

for

A G A Y N S T
for our wepyng with these maner of
wordes.

What do ye? will ye abynde your
daies, and finishe your olde age with
this unprofitable, yea I maie well saie
pynishe lamentacion? wherfore do you
with so iniuste complaintes accuse and
blame destenie, fortune and deathe?
Haue you enuie at me, because I am
deliuered from the iuels of that life, and
am brought to this felicitee that I am
in? But be it, that your fatherly good-
nes and pure amitee dothe not enuie
me: Yet what other thing meaneth this
sorowfull complaining? Thynke you
this worthie to be lamented, that I am
deducte and brought from thralldome to
libertee, from peine and care to plea-
sure and felicitee, from darkenes unto
lighe, from perill and danger unto sure
saftie, from death unto life, from sickes-
nesses and diseases unto immortalitee,
from so many iuels to so high goodness,
from

DEATH.

from thynges caduke and transitorie to
the euerlastyng ; fro thynges earthly to
celestiall , and finally from the corrupte
and vncleane companie of all people to
the felowship of angels : Tell me (I
prey you) for the great loue and kynd-
nes that ye beare me , If it lase in your
power to reliue me agayne , wolde ye
reuiue me ? Than what offence haue I
doone , to deserue so great hatred of
you ? If ye wolde not reliue me againe ,
than for what purpose seruen all these
lamentacions , the whiche (as I haue
saied) are not onely vnproufitable , but
also vngodly ? But ne were it so , that
immortalitee had a while agone clene
deprived me of all sorowe , I wolde like
wise with wepyng teares bewaile your
sorowfull mourning , & sore haue rewed
vpon thilke grosse and darke cloudines
of your mynde . But ye saie , that you on
your part wepe and make lamentacion .
for soth therin ye doo not like louers :

L.ii. but

A G A Y N S T

but like unto them that haue a respecte
to them selfewarde , and that will (to
others discommodee) see to their own
busines. Now go to, tell me, what losse
is it , that ye sustaine by my death? Is
it because ye can not haue me in your
sight? Perdie ye maie never the lesse,
at your owne pleasure remembre me
the meane time , ye and so muche the
more happily , in howe muche I am in
sure saftee. For loke that ye esteeme me
now delivered from all the iuels, what
so ever thei be , that maie bechance a
mortall man in his life: of whiche your
longe and robustous life (for a greac
parte) hath erperience: And though
that I be not with you , with lowly o-
beissance to do you seruice , yet may I
be a sure and an effectuall aduocate for
you before the high maiestee of God.
And finally , howe small a thinge is it,
that deuideth our conuersacion and fa-
miliaritee? Nowe loke that you so en-
deuore

DEATH.

denoſt your ſelſe, that whan ye haue
well and vertuouslie paſſed the course
of your lyfe, that ye maie than at the
houre of deathe be fonnde worthy to be
conueighed hither.

If that your ſonnes (I ſaie) ſhulde
ſaie theſe wordes to vs: might we not
well be aſhamed thus to lament and
mourne as we doo?

With theſe maner of reaſons I am
wonte to eafe the grieſte of myne owne
minde: of the whiche I wolde that you
ſhulde be parte taker, not all only that
ye haue any great neede of thofe reme-
dies: but I demed it agreeable, that ye
ſhulde be partaker of my conſolacion,
of whofe ſorowe I was partiner. But
briely to conclude all that hath ben at
lengthe reſoned: by this maner meane
ye ſhall alwage the ſmartryng ſorowe of
your mynde.

My ſonne is dead: Ye begot a mortal
creature. I haue loſte a great iewell:

A G A Y N S T

Ye haue yelded it againe to hym that
frely gane it vnto you. It is a right gre-
uous thing to be thus destitute: It shuld
be the lighter borne, that maie be re-
dressed by some meane. He hath lefte
me his father alone comfortles: what
dothe it auaile to wepe and waile for
that that can not be remedied? or why
mourne you for that, the whiche chan-
geth to so many thousandes as well as
to you? Alas I can not chose but wepe
for the deth of my sonne: Ye but he that
dieth well, doothe in no wise perisshe.
But he died to soone: He that dieth
well, dieth not to soone. He died longe
before his daie was come: There is no
man that hath a daie certaine appoin-
ted vnto him. He deceased in his flow-
rishing youthe: It is than best to die
whan to live it is mosse sweete.

He died a very yonge man: So is he
withdrawen from the mo iuels and
troublis of this life. I haue losse the
beste

DEATH.

besse childe that any man coude haue:
Be glad that ye had suche one. He de-
parted out of this worlde an innocent:
No death shulde be more desired and
lesse bewailed. Ye but it is not lefull
for me the meane while to haue fruictō
with my sonne: Yes in your minde you
maie: and within shorte space you and
he to gether bodie and soule shall ioye
and take pleasure. If ye knowe any
better remedies than these, of gen-
tilnes let me here them: if ye
do not, than vse these with
me. And thus fare ye wel,
whiche your sonne al-
so wolde ye shulde.

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